

Statement by the Honorable John E. Fogarty, M.C.
Before the House Education and Labor Committee
July 14, 1949

I appear before you in support of HR 3523, a bill to establish a Federal Commission on Services for the Physically Handicapped, which it has been my honor and privilege to introduce to the Congress. This bill and its companion measures are, in my opinion, a real step forward in the interest of that great segment of our population who are afflicted by physical handicaps.

The district which I represent, the second district of Rhode Island, is a typical group of communities in which live a representative cross section of the type of people to be found throughout the length and breadth of our country. In my district are the usual number of handicapped persons, many of whom I know personally and have learned to admire and respect for the valiant manner in which they have rehabilitated themselves. I know, from my contacts with them, that such rehabilitation cannot be done alone - it requires the cooperation of many and the assistance of a great number of private, local, State and Federal agencies.

At the present time such avenues of assistance are spread throughout a great many sources - it is estimated that in the federal government alone, some forty agencies have a part in the handicapped program. HR 3523 would coordinate these varied activities and permit effective planning and programming of a truly adequate rehabilitation plan. It would assure the best of care and treatment for all handicapped persons and provide for aid to such persons in all their many aggravated problems - to the end that those who are employable may eventually attain the goal of being self-supporting.

In my capacity as Chairman of the subcommittee handling the appropriation for the Federal Security Agency it has been forcibly brought to my attention many times that, given adequate facilities, a workable solution to even the most acute problem can usually be developed. It seems to me that we have here a great opportunity to improve our methods of caring for the less fortunate members of our family and I sincerely hope that the Committee favorably reports the Bill.